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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 9 April 2014

[*on the report of the Fifth Committee (A/68/691/Add.1)*]

68/264. Progress towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 59/272 of 23 December 2004 and 60/254 of 8 May 2006, section I of its resolution 60/260 of 8 May 2006 and its resolutions 60/283 of 7 July 2006, 61/245 of 22 December 2006, 63/276 of 7 April 2009, 64/259 of 29 March 2010, 66/257 of 9 April 2012 and 67/253 of 12 April 2013,

Having considered the third progress report of the Secretary-General on the accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat[1] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[2]

Reaffirming its commitment to strengthening accountability in the United Nations Secretariat and the accountability of the Secretary-General for the performance of the Secretariat to all Member States,

Emphasizing that accountability is a central pillar of effective and efficient management that requires attention and strong commitment at all levels of the Secretariat, especially at the highest level,

Recognizing and reaffirming the important role of the oversight bodies in the development of an accountability system that is relevant to the United Nations,

1. *Takes note* of the third progress report of the Secretary-General on the accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat;[1]

2. *Endorses* the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[2] subject to the provisions of the present resolution;

3. *Emphasizes* the importance of promoting a culture of accountability, results-based management, enterprise risk management and internal control at all

[1] A/68/697.
[2] A/68/783.

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levels in the Secretariat through the continued leadership and commitment of senior managers, and reiterates its request that the Secretary-General take appropriate measures to that end, including the training of relevant staff;

4. *Reiterates* the provisions of paragraphs 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17 and 19 of section I of its resolution 66/257;

5. *Stresses* the role and responsibility of the Management Committee in promoting and advancing the accountability system as a whole;

6. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue strengthening and improving the accountability framework by taking advantage of the benefits related to the deployment of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards and Umoja, and requests him to report thereon in the context of the next progress report on accountability;

7. *Reaffirms* that results-based management and performance reporting are essential pillars of a comprehensive accountability framework;

8. *Reiterates* that results-based management will require the Organization to create a sustained focus on results, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to take concrete measures to achieve a cultural change throughout the Organization;

9. *Also reiterates* the provisions of paragraph 29 of section I of its resolution 66/257 and paragraph 6 (*b*) of its resolution 67/253;

10. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the Secretary-General to implement the results-based management framework at the United Nations in a phased manner, and requests him to implement the recommendations of the results-based-management working group, taking into account the lessons learned and challenges related to the implementation, as referred to in the report of the Secretary-General;

11. *Recalls* the recommendations contained in paragraph 16 of the report of the Advisory Committee,[3] as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/259, and reiterates its request to the Secretary-General in this regard;

12. *Also recalls* paragraph 11 of its resolution 64/259, and reiterates its request that the Secretary-General identify appropriate methods and tools to portray the efficiency with which the Secretariat undertakes its work;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to promote a culture of self-evaluation throughout the Organization, to continue to mainstream the use of relevant monitoring and evaluation tools in programme planning and implementation, to continue to provide staff with adequate training, as appropriate, and to include in his report on the implementation of the present resolution information on measures taken in this regard;

14. *Recalls* paragraph 7 of its resolution 67/253, notes the progress made by the Secretary-General towards the implementation of enterprise risk management, and urges him to complete the current Secretariat-wide risk assessment as a matter of priority;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include the outcome of the Secretariat-wide risk assessment in the next progress report on accountability, including

[3] A/64/683 and Corr.1.

information on the development of risk registers, response plans and a comprehensive risk treatment plan;

16. *Reiterates* that compacts and end-of-year assessments are unique accountability tools for senior managers and contribute to transparency in the Organization;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consider the inclusion in the senior managers' compacts of a new standard managerial indicator related to the issuance of official documentation to intergovernmental bodies and General Assembly committees and to report thereon in the context of the next progress report on accountability;

18. *Reiterates its requests* to the Secretary-General to take further concrete measures to ensure that the compacts system becomes a meaningful and powerful instrument of accountability, to take actions to address systemic issues that prevent managers from meeting their targets and to report to the General Assembly on the progress achieved in this regard in the context of the next progress report on accountability;

19. *Recalls* paragraph 20 of its resolution 66/257 and paragraph 21 of the report of the Advisory Committee,[2] and notes with concern that the current appraisal system lacks credibility;

20. *Also recalls* paragraphs 5 and 7 of section I of its resolution 68/252 of 27 December 2013, and looks forward to considering the comprehensive performance management proposal of the Secretary-General under the agenda item on human resources management at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly;

21. *Further recalls* paragraph 15 of the report of the Advisory Committee, encourages the Secretary-General to ensure the full implementation of the zero-tolerance policy of the Organization regarding any kind of sexual exploitation or abuse, and looks forward to its consideration of this matter in the context of the next report on cross-cutting issues related to peacekeeping operations;

22. *Emphasizes* the importance of establishing and fully implementing real, effective and efficient mechanisms that foster institutional and personal accountability at all levels;

23. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts and recent initiatives undertaken by the Secretariat to strengthen ethics in the Organization, and urges the timely implementation of the proposed action plan;

24. *Emphasizes* the importance of enhancing the processes and responses of the Organization to ensure that it encourages the reporting of serious misconduct, protects whistle-blowers from retaliation and intervenes to prevent retaliation from occurring;

25. *Looks forward* to the results and outcomes of the comprehensive review of the regulatory framework for the updating of the Secretary-General's bulletin on protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations;[4]

[4] ST/SGB/2005/21.

26. *Recognizes* the importance of criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission, and reaffirms the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, which provide the basis for the guidance of the Secretary-General in this regard;

27. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures to hold all staff, in particular senior managers, accountable for mismanagement and wrongful or improper decisions and to report cases handled by the Secretary-General and the types of disciplinary measures that have been imposed;

28. *Stresses* the need also to address poor decision-making in an effective manner, in particular to reduce such instances by sharing lessons learned and best practices;

29. *Emphasizes* that the timely submission of documents is an important aspect of the Secretariat's accountability to Member States;

30. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at the first part of its resumed sixty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to keep under review the frequency of future progress reports.

81st plenary meeting
9 April 2014